Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MOSCOW 16033 01 OF 02 061441Z

42
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
---------- 027099
R 061347Z NOV 75
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6508
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 16033

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: PINT, SREF, CVIS, OGEN, UR
SUBJ: SOVIET JEWISH EMIGRATION

REFS: (A) STATE 254171 (B) MOSCOW 15089
(C) MOSCOW 15619 (D) LENINGRAD 1637

1. SUMMARY. JEWISH EMIGRATION INCREASES IN OCTOBER, HARASSMENT CONTINUES BOTH IN MOSCOW AND ESPECIALLY IN PROVINBCES. NO PROMINENT REFUSENIKS HAVE RECENTLY BEEN ISSUED VISASS. SOVIET OFFICIAL POLICY ON EMIGRATION IS UNCHANGED. IN THE ABSENCE OF A POLICY DECISION TO STEP UP THE RATE OF EMIGRATION (WHICH WE THINK UNLIKELY) WE SEE LITTLE CHANGE UNTIL AFTER PARTY CONGRESS OCCURS AND ITS EFFECTS ARE ASSESSED BY SOVIET BUREAUCRATS. END SUMMARY.

2. REPORTING AND ANALYSIS WHICH FOLLOWS IS KEYED TO THE PARAGRAPHS OF REFTEL A. WE SHALL INCREASE OUR EFFORTS TO REPORT ON JEWISH EMIGRATION AND RELATED ISSUES, BOTH WITH RESPECT TO THE NUMBERS OF VISAS ISSUED AND WITH RESPECT TO THE MOOD OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY.

3. RE PARA 1A, REFTEL A. OUR DUTCH SOURCE (EMBOFF RESPONSIBLE FOR ISSUING ISRAELI VISAS TO SOVIET CITIZENS WITH EXIT PERMISSION) HAS AGREED TO GIVE US
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 16033 01 OF 02 061441Z

MORE FREQUENT RUNDOWNS ON HIS VISA CASELOAD AND WILL

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

PREPARE REGIONAL STATISTICAL ANALYSES (WE WILL FORWARD THESE). HE NOTES THAT 1460 SOVIET CITIZENS (1085 ADULTS AND 375 MINOR DEPENDENTS) COMPLETED FINAL PROCESSING FOR ISRAELI VISAS DURING OCTOBER 1975. THIS TOTAL REPRESENTS 32 PER CENT INCREASE OVER SEPTEMBER (1099) AND IS HIGHEST 1975 MONTHLY TOTAL. TOTAL NUMBER OF EMIGRANTS RECEIVING ISRAELI VISAS DURING JANUARY-OCTOBER 1975 IS 10,738 (8,025 ADULTS AND 2,713 MINOR DEPENDENTS). ERRONEOUS FIGURE OF 11,278 EMIGRANTS THROUGH SEPTEMBER (PARA 2A, REF A AND REF B) IS RESULT OF A CALCULATING ERROR. SO FAR IN NOVEMBER THE DAILY RATE OF VISA ISSUANCE HAS REMAINED STEADY, BUT OUR SOURCE EXPECTS THAT THE NUMBER OF APPLICANTS WILL BE GREATLY REDUCED DURING THE NOVEMBER HOLIDAYS BECAUSE OF DIFFICULTIES IN OBTAINING ACCOMODATIONS IN MOSCOW.

4. IT IS TOO EARLY DEFINITIVELY TO JUDGE WHETHER THIS UPTURN IN SOVIET JEWISH EMIGRATION TO ISRAEL CONSITITUTES A NEW TREND (PARA 2C, REF A). SOURCE (AS WELL AS DEPARTMENT) NOTED THAT SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER WERE MONTHS OF HIGH ISRAELI VISA ISSUANCE IN 1973 AND 1974 AND THAT FIGURES IN BOTH YEARS DECLINED AFTER OCTOBER. THE ASSUMPTION THAT THIS WILL ALSO BE TRUE OF 1975 IS REINFORCED BY THE FACT THAT THE PERCENTAGE DECLINE IN VISA ISSUANCE IN OCTOBER 1975 COMPARED WITH OCTOBER 1974 (30 PER CENT) AND WITH OCTOBER 1973 (65 PER CENT) IS ROUGHLY THE SAME AS THE PERCENTAGE DECLINE IN ANY PREVIOUS MONTH IN 1975 COMPARED WITH THE SAME MONTH IN 1974 AND 1973. EMBASSY AGREES WITH DEPARTMENT'S CONCLUSION (PARA 2B, REF A), THAT DUTCH FUGURES SHOULD BE OUR PRIMARY SOURCE FOR MONITORING THE LEVEL OF JEWISH EMIGRATION WITH ISRAELI FUGURES AS BACKUP

5. WITH RESPECT TO THE ATTITUDES AND EXPECTATIONS OF JEWISH EMIGRANTS ISSUED ISRAELI VISAS, SOURCE MAINTAINED THAT HE IS CURRENTLY RECEIVING FEWER COMPLAINTS OF REFUSALS THAN DURING PREVIOUS MONTHS. SOURCE ALSO NOTED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED FEWER REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT RECENTLY; APPLICANTS HAVE SEEMED RELATIVELY MORE AFFLUENT
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 16033 01 OF 02 061441Z

THAN IN THE PAST. HE TOLD US, HOWEVER, THAT THE HARASSMENT AND OTHER MEASURES EMPLOYED TO DETER JEWS FROM REQUESTING EXIT PERMISSION APPARENTLY CONTINUES. HE NOTED THAT HARASSMENT OF PROSPECTIVE EMIGRANTS OFTEN DOES NOT CEASE WITH THE RECEIPT OF EXIT PERMISSION. (IN ONE RECENT CASE KNOWN TO US A REFUSENIK WHO HAD FINALLY RECEIVED EXIT PERMISSION HAD HIS APARTMENT BROKEN INTO AND WAS DETAINED BY THE POLICE FOR SEVERAL

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

HOURS ON THE EVE OF HIS DEPARTURE.)

6. DUTCH EMBOFF IS CURRENTLY PREPARING DETAILED BREAKDOWN OF REGIONAL ORIGIN OF EMIGRANTS ISSUED VISAS DURING OCTOBER WHICH HE WILL GIVE US. HE FEELS THAT DURING OCTOBER MORE URBAN JEWS HAD RECEIVED VISAS WHILE THE NUMBER OF RURAL JEWS WHOM HE PROCESSED DECLINED. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, THERE HAS ALSO BEEN AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF EMIGRANTS FROM CITIES SUCH AS KIEV AND MINSK WHICH HAVE HAD HISTORIACALLY BAD TRACK RECORDS ON GRANTING EXIT PERMISSION FOR ISRAEL. THE NUMBER OF "VYZOVS" FROM ISRAEL PASSING THROUGH THE NETHERLANDS EMBASSY HAS DECLINED, BUT OUR SOURCE ATTRIBUTES THIS TO INCREASED DIRECT MAILING OF INVITATIONS. THE LEVEL OF REQUESTS TO THE NETHERLANDS EMBASSY FOR RENEWALS AND CORRECTIONS OF "VYZOVS" REMAINS HIGH. THIS INDICATES TO HIM THAT SOME JEWS MAY BE KEEPING THE EMIGRATION OPTION OPEN WHILE DELAYING THE DECISION TO REQUEST EXIT PERMISSION.

4. RE PARA 1B, REF A. THE MOST RECENT INDICATIONS OF TREATMENT OF PROMINENT REFUSENIKS ARE PROVIDED BY LENINGRAD REFTEL AND DR. LEVICH'S CASE (REF C). OUR JEWISH DISSIDENT SOURCES NOTE THAT NO PROMINENT MUSCOVITE REFUSENIK HAS RECEIVED AN EXIT VISA SINCE BEFORE THE HELSINKI SUMMIT. ALTHOUGH AS REPORTED PREVIOUSLY, LEVICH IS NOT WELL-LIKED AMONG JEWISH DISSIDENTS, HIS MOST RECENT REFUSAL IS SEEN BY SOME MEMBERS OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY AS INDICATIVE OF A HARDENING LINE. OTHERS, HOWEVER, CONTINUE TO FEEL THAT IT IS LEVICH'S CORRESPONDING MEMBERSHIP IN THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND THE CONNECTION WITH THE SAKHAROV AFFAIR THAT HAS PREVENTED HIS GETTING A VISA
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 MOSCOW 16033 01 OF 02 061441Z

AT THIS TIME. WE KNOW OF NO PARTICULAR INCREASE IN HARASS-MENT OF PROMINENT MUSCOVITE REFUSENIKS EXCEPT THAT DURING THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES IN EARLY OCTOBER THOSE REFUSENIKS WITH SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUNDS WERE VERY CLOSELY TAILED. (IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT EMBOFF RESPONSIBLE FOR FOLLOWING JEWISH AFFAIRNS WAS DEMONSTRATIVELY AND UNPLEASANTLY TAILED BY UP TO THREE CARS AT A TIME DURING A THREE-DAY PERIOD LAST WEEK. HIS TAILS APPEAR TO BE CALLLED OFF AT PRESENT.)

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Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MOSCOW 16033 02 OF 02 061448Z

41
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
---------- 027093
R 061347Z NOV 75
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6509
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MOSCOW 16033

EXDIS

8. WE ARE INFORMED, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NO WAY OF CHECKING THIS, THATHARASSMENT OF JEWS IN GENERAL HAS INCREASED IN PROVINCIAL CITIES, ESPECIALLY IN CITIES CLOSED TO FOREIGNERS. IT IS THIS FACT, WE ARE TOLD, THAT HELPS TO EXPLAIN THE SMALLER NUMBER OF VISA APPLICATIONS. IT WOULD NOT BE SURPRISING IF THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES WERE RELATIVELY RESTRAINED IN THEIR TREATMENT OF PROMINENT MUSCOVITE REFUSENIKS WHO HAVE CONTINUOUS ACCESS TO WESTERN DIPLOMATS AND NEWSMEN WHILE STEPPING UP HARASSMENT IN THE PROVINCES. IT IS PROBABLY ALSO TRUE THAT OLD-FASHIONED RUSSIAN ANTI-SEMITISM, WHICH IS STILL RIFE IN THE USSR, FINDS EASIER EXPRESSION IN THE PROVINCES THAT IN MOSCOW.

9. RE PARA 1C, REF D. RECENT VISITS BY AMERICAN OFFICIALS, COMMENTS BY SENIOR SOVIET OFFICIALS FROM BREZHNEV (CODEL ALBERT) THROUGH DEPUTY MINISTERS OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS (CODEL VANIK), AND DOWN TO THE OVIR LEVEL (CODEL DRINAN) ALL TAKE THE SAME BASIC LINE -- I.E., ALL JEWS WHO WANT TO CAN GET OUT EXCEPT SECURITY CASES. WE GATHER THAT IN BEN WATTENBERG'S RECENT TALKS WITH ARBATOV, LATTER TOOK SAME LINE. WE NOTE PARENTHETICALLY THAT ONE PROBLEM WHICH SOVIET OFFICIALS REGULARLY FACE WHEN ASKED BY VISITING AMERICANS ABOUT THE JEWISH QUESTION STEMS FROM A GENUINE BEWILDERMENT THAT ANYONE MIGHT WISH TO LEAVE THE SOVIET UNION. MOST SOVIET
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 16033 02 OF 02 061448Z

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

OFFICIALS, INDEED MOST SOVIETS, FIND IT DISTURBING,
PERHAPS ALMOSTTREASONOUS, THAT SOMEONE SHOULD WISH
PERMANENTLY TO LEAVE HIS NATIVE LAND. WE WILL, IN
OUR OFFICIAL CONTACTS, CONTINUE TO PROBE SOVIET
OFFICIALS FOR THEIR VIEWS ON EMIGRATION ISSUES.

10. UNTIL WE SEE THE FIGURES FOR NEXT MONTH, WE
CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THERE WILL NOT BE MUCH MOVEMENT
EITHER IN GRANTING EXIT VISAS TO SPECIFIC, PROMINENT
LONG-TERM REFUSENIKS OR IN INCREASING THE TOTALNUMBER
OF JEWS PERMITTED TO EMIGRATE, AT LEAST UNTIL
AFTER THE PART CONGRESS. UNLESS A SPECIFIC POLICY
DECISION HAS BEEN MADE TO INCREASE EMIGRATION, THE
NORMALLY SCLEROTIC BUREAUCRACY WILL MOVE EVEN MORE
SLOWLY IN THE PERIOD WHEN SENIOR OFFICIALS' ENERGIES
ARE LIKELY TO BE DEVOTED TO THE CONGRESS PREPARATIONS,
AND WHEN OFFICIALS AT ALL LEVELS SEEK TO AVOID TAKING
RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAKING DECISIONS THAT MAY TURN OUT
TO BE "WROND," IN LIGHT OF THE RESULTS OF THE CONGRESS.
THERE IS, OF COURSE, THE POSSIBILITY THAT ONE RESULT OF
PERSONNEL AND POLICY DECISIONS MADE AT THE CONGRESS
WILL RESULT IIN A GENERALLY HARDER LINE WITH RESPECT
TO THE WHOLE QUESTION OF JEWISH EMIGRATION.
BUT APART FROM THAT, THE SOVIET BUREAUCRAT, NORMALLY
RELUCTANT TO TAKE A DECISION, NOW HAS A NEW, AND TO HIM,
IMPORTANT REASON FOR FURTHER PROCRASTINATION. TO BE
SURE, AN INDIVIDUAL HIGH-LEVEL APPEAL FROM A PROMINENT
FOREIGNER MAY RESULT, EVEN IN THE PRE-CONGRESS PERIOD,
IN A DECISION TO LET A SPECIFIC PERSON OUT. SIMILARLY,
IN PREPARATION FOR A SOVIET-AMERICAN SUMMIT, THE
AUTHORITIES MIGHT WISH TO MAKE A GESTURE. BUT EXCEPT
FOR SUCH ISOLATED EXAMPLES, WE THINK IT UNLIKELY
THAT ANY CHANGES WILL BE MADE IN THIS AREA UNTIL AFTER
THE CONGRESS HAS MET AND POLICY CHANGES RESULTING
THEREFROM HAVE BEEN MADE KNOWN TO LOWER LEVELS OF
SOVIET ADMINISTRATORS. HOWEVER, WE CANNOT FULE OUT
THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE SOVIETS MAY BE TRYING
TO SEND US A SIGNAL REGARDING EMIGRATION UNTIL WE
SEE THE FIGURES FOR NOVEMBER.

11. THE MORALE OF JEWISH DISSIDENT CIRCLES IN MOSCOW
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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 16033 02 OF 02 061448Z

IS GETTING LOWER. FOR ONE THING, THEY REALIZE THAT
THEY ARE NO LONGER "NEWS," AS A GENERAL RULE, FOR
THE WESTERN PRESS CORPS. FOR ANOTHER THING, THE
EUPHORIA GENERATED BY THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT HAS DISAPPEARED
AS IT BECOMES INCREASINGLY CLEAR THAT NO BASIC CHANGES
WILL EVENTUATE FROM CSCE. THE WORLD OF MUSCOVITE

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

INTELLECTUALS, OF WHICH JEWISH DISSIDENTS FORM A SIZEABLE PART, IS SMALL AND CLOSELY KNIT. ALTHOUGH SAKHAROV NEVER HAD THE SAME SYMBOLIC MEANING FOR THE JEWS THAT HE DID AND DOES FOR OTHER SOVIET DISSIDENTS, JEWISH MORALE IS AFFECTED BY THE APPARENT SOVIET UNWILLINGNESS TO ALLOW SAKHAROV TO TRAVEL TO OSLO. WE DO NOT, NEVERTHELESS, FEEL THAT THE SITUATION FOR THE MOSCOW JEWISHCOMMUNITY HAS NECESSARILY WORSENED OBJECTIVELY IN COMPARISON WITH SIX MONTHS AGO. RATHER, IT DID NOT IMPROVE AT A TIME WHEN IT SEEMED AT LEAST POSSIBLE THAT IT MIGHT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: JEWS, DATA, EMIGRANTS, EXIT VISAS, TRAVEL CONTROLS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 NOV 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MOSCOW16033
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750386-0043
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751168/aaaacizp.tel
Line Count: 289
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 STATE 254171, 75 MOSCOW 15089
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: WITHDRAWN <10 Jun 2003 by MorefiRH, INA>; RELEASED <09 JUL 2003 by MorefiRH>; RELEASED <09 Jul 2003 by MorefiRH>; RELEASED <09 Jul 2003 by MorefiRH>; APPROVED <20 OCT 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET JEWISH EMIGRATION
TAGS: PINT, SREF, CVIS, OGEN, UR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006